PALMETTO RURAL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE

Vol. 2, No. 6 | November/December 2012

CONNECTION

SANTA'S OTHER HELPERS

Broadband helps shop keep the Lowcountry in the spirit year-round

INSIDE:

- Rizer's offers food and fun
- Lodge members get fiber
- Holiday appetizer recipes

This is the time of year when we all think of connections

Around the holidays, most of us will connect with friends and family, some of whom we may not have seen in a while. We'll connect with our community by helping out those of us who are less fortunate. The smell of hot cider and the taste of holiday food can connect us to memories of Christmases gone by. At many houses, the ornaments on our trees are connected to the friend who gave it to us or the place we were when we got it.

As a telephone, broadband and television company, PRTC is all about connections as well. Connections are so important to us that we chose Connection as the name for this magazine!

The most obvious connections we provide are the physical copper and fiber lines around our community. But what's more important is the connections between people, businesses and other groups that our network facilitates. In this issue, you can read about how a local shopkeeper and a restaurant owner use those connections to help their businesses flourish. You'll also read about how one local family uses our services to stay connected to a husband and father serving our country on the other side of the planet.

All three of these examples make me proud to be a part of the company that provides such connections. As a member and part-owner of this cooperative, you should also be proud.

That brings me to our most important connection of all — our connection with you! Unlike giant corporate phone and Internet providers, our customers are a part of our operation. We build and send out this magazine to keep you connected with your cooperative and let you know what's going on. That important connection is also why next month, you will notice a bigger magazine with more of the stories, information and recipes you love. Through a regional partnership, we will be doubling the size of the Connection.

But, enough talk about business. We'll have more details about that in the January/February issue. For now, I hope you get plenty of opportunities to share some of those special connections with your loved ones this season.

Everyone at PRTC would like to join me in wishing you the happiest of holiday seasons, a Merry Christmas and a happy start to the New Year! ✦

Jason Dandridge is Chief Executive Officer for PRTC

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PRTC is now on Facebook! Like our page to stay up-to-date on what's going on with your cooperative.

PALMETTO RURAL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE, INC.

is a member-owned cooperative providing a complete telecommunications solution (voice, Internet, digital TV and wireless phone) to the homes and businesses of Colleton County, South Carolina.

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CONNECTION

is a bimonthly newsletter published by Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative, © 2012. It is distributed without charge to all member/owners of the Cooperative.
Send address corrections to:
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Produced for PRTC by:
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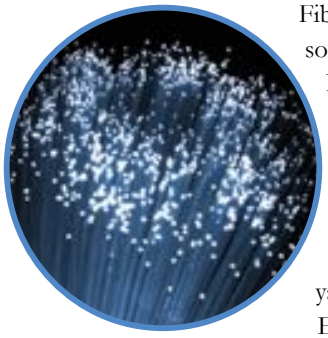
On the cover ...

Cindy Corley straightens the branches of the "Peacock Tree" at her shop, Old Bank Christmas and Gifts, in Downtown Walterboro.

Lodge members beginning switch to fiber



Fiber crews are hard at work in and around Colleton County, and some customers are starting to see the fruits of the crews' labor. Beginning this month, PRTC staff will be calling members in Lodge to schedule cutover to the new fiber network. In this important final step for that community, technicians will need to install a fiber terminal and battery backup system in each member's home. The scheduler will contact the members to set up a time when someone will be home. Taking fiber the last few yards to the home will also mean crews will have to disturb lawns.

Elsewhere, crews have completed more than 200 miles of fiber lines. Construction is well underway in North Walterboro around Jefferies Highway and Academy Road, and is beginning in the 538 exchange area of Sniders Highway. The North Walterboro work is slated to continue for about six months, while the work around Sniders Highway should last about eight months.

We appreciate your patience in this massive project and look forward to the day when all of our members have been switched to the new network.

Remote DVR gives members flexibility

Millions of folks around the country will be traveling this holiday season. And with the added stress of holiday shopping, parties and pageants, it can be easy to forget to record your favorite shows.

PRTC has a solution. Our Remote DVR (RDVR) system allows you to access your recording schedule from any computer or mobile device. Once you create an account, it's simple to view and edit the programs you want your system to record. "It gives you flexibility to manage your DVR," says PRTC Chief Technology Officer Tony Stout.

To get started, press the menu key on your remote, select the Apps menu and then select Remote DVR. Once you create a username and password on the TV, you can then use that login information to access the DVR remotely from the RDVR website (see box below).

For additional assistance, see the RDVR article on Page 28 of your Digital TV User Guide.

Click

To access the RDVR website from your computer visit: **https://dvr.prtc.coop**

To access the site from a mobile device visit: **http://dvr.prtc.coop/Remotedvr.WebMobile/Default.aspx**

Selected pay-per-view TV programming schedule

Nov. 1
AXS TV Fights: Legacy Fighting Championship 13

Nov. 11
Wrestling Live: TNA Turning Point

Nov. 17
Boxing Live: Carl Froch vs. Yusaf Mack
Mixed Martial Arts Live: UFC 154 St-Pierre vs. Condit

Nov. 18
Wrestling Live: WWE Survivor Series

Nov. 29
Bob Dylan and The Band: Down in the Flood

Video on Demand New Release Schedule

For a small rental fee, PRTC's Video On Demand service gives you access to new movies right in your living room. Some titles (designated with an *) are available as many as eight weeks before they come to Netflix or Redbox. Dates and titles are subject to change.

Nov. 6
- Arthur Christmas

Nov. 9
- The Amazing Spider-Man

Nov. 13
- Brave
- Savages*
- The Watch*

Nov. 20
- The Expendables 2

Nov. 27
- Step Up: Revolution
- ParaNorman*

Nov. 30
- Men in Black III
- Sparkle

Dec. 4
- The Dark Knight Rises*
- Hope Springs
- The Odd Life of Timothy Green

Dec. 11
- Ted*
- The Bourne Legacy*

Dec. 18
- Total Recall

Dec. 21
- Premium Rush
- Resident Evil: Retribution

On the 'Rize'

Sausage and company make Rizer's Pork & Produce a local favorite

The sausage alone is worth the drive. But when people visit Phillip Rizer's restaurant in Lodge, they come for more than just the pork.

"I've got two reasons to come here," says Russ Kinard, of Lodge. "He's got good food and he's a good friend."

By the looks of his packed dining room and the line at his buffet, Rizer has a lot of friends. Some days, when the dining room is full, diners spill out into the gravel parking lot eating with their plate on the hood of a truck or sitting on a tailgate. "We cook food the old country way," says Rizer, who opened Rizer's Pork & Produce in 2004. "We draw from everywhere. It's nice to provide a service to people who appreciate it."

Phillip Rizer has built his business in Lodge on fresh food and old friendships.

Diners say the sausage, collards, pork chops, pound cake and beans are some of Rizer's specialties.

Rizer's customers enjoy watching sports or getting caught up on news or weather on the dining room's television.

Rizer jokes around and checks in with customers throughout their meals, jumping in on conversations about logging trucks, the year's corn crop and the most recent episodes of "Duck Dynasty." While many of the customers are regulars, Rizer is also quick to welcome and get to know newcomers. "We have new customers from everywhere," says Rizer, who has met diners from as far away as Alaska and Australia.

A few years back, Rizer decided the dining room needed something more. He bought a 47-inch television and added PRTC's digital TV package. Usually, Rizer puts the TV on a news channel or ESPN, but this summer diners watched Olympic diving, swimming and even table tennis while they attacked their plates. If the weather is bad, Rizer flips to The Weather Channel. And of course, every Saturday in the fall, Rizer – who studied agricultural economics at Clemson – shows hours and hours of football.

But while the company and atmosphere are excellent, Rizer prides himself on the food. The buffet is loaded with barbecue pork, sausage, pork chops, collards, macaroni, beans and more. Fridays mean shrimp and fish and there's usually steak one night a week. "I like the vegetables as much as I like the pork chops," says diner Buddy Ulmer from Walterboro.

For years, Rizer's family grew crops around Lodge and ran a sizable hog farm. But when pork prices "tanked" in 1998, he decided he needed to branch out and open a produce store. The restaurant came a few years later. "We knew we had to either form a niche market or get out of the business," Rizer says.

Judging by the full dining room, he's got plenty of friends who are glad he decided to stay in business. ✦

365 Days of Christmas

Cindy and John Corley stock about 10,000 ornaments at their shop downtown.

Downtown Walterboro shop shares Christmas spirit year-round

People could be eating watermelons and shooting off fireworks in 100-degree weather outside, but inside 229 E. Washington St., it's always Dec. 24.

Within the historic bank at that address, fir trees with ornaments, snowy miniature villages and happy caroler figurines line the shelves. Welcome to Cindy Corley's Old Bank Christmas & Gifts. "People come in at different times of the year, but they do all of their Christmas shopping here," Corley says.

For the past nine years, Corley and her husband John have run the shop trying to meet Colleton County's festive needs. The idea for the shop came from a visit to Frankenmuth, Mich., where the couple visited Bronner's Christmas Wonderland. Though Corley had always loved decorating for Christmas, Bronner's — the world's largest Christmas shop — made quite an impact on her. "I fell in love," she says. "After I saw theirs, I said 'I can do this.'"

Though her shop operates on a smaller scale than Bronner's, Corley has grown the store to include bakery items, candles and five rooms full of Christmas decorations. She has about 10,000 ornaments and at least 10 trees at any given time. The shop is also one of the few places to see a Thanksgiving or a Halloween tree.

"There is so much to see that you can't see it all in one trip," Corley says.

But keeping up with such an inventory is no Christmas miracle. It takes planning, hard work and a high-speed Internet connection from PRTC. "If we didn't have high-speed Internet we couldn't function," Corely says.

Her suppliers have made changes as well. When she opened, a sales rep from each vendor would come by annually with a stack of catalogs. Now, if a salesperson comes by they bring a laptop or a tablet. "Now, if you don't have the Internet, you can't see their products," Corely says. "I'm just able to quickly look up anything I need."

That's not the kind of technology you might expect to find in the historic building, but the Corleys have worked to incorporate the old with the new. Earlier this year they were recognized with a Paul Jacob Walters Award from the Walterboro Historical Society for adaptive use of a historic building. "We are so proud of that," Corely says.

In another nod to the town's history, they also create a crushed marble ornament every Christmas of historic buildings around town. In the past, they have featured the water tower, Dairyland, the Southland Restaurant, the Courthouse and their own building. This year's ornament depicts Hiott's Pharmacy. ✦

Cindy Corley's decorating trends to expect this Christmas

❋ SILENT NIGHT, OWLY NIGHT

Deer, polar bears, penguins and seals have all been common in Christmases past, but this year designers are producing ornaments, greenery and other decorations with owls.

❋ CHRISTMAS COLOR

In recessions, people tend to decorate with more muted, traditional colors. As the economy recovers, expect to see more purples, blues and lime green this season.

❋ O SKINNY TREE, O SKINNY TREE

Narrow pencil trees returned to the Christmas scene in 2010 and 2011. Expect to see more such space-saving trees this year.

❋ WE THREE THEMES

Theme trees — whether they feature peacocks, Coca-Cola or Noah's ark — continue to grow in popularity. The trees allow the decorator to express his or her personality.

BROADBAND brings families together

When Jakema Abbigail Kinsey wants to see her dad, she knows where to look.

"She will run up to the computer and she'll say 'look at my daddy' and then she'll wave," says her mother, PRTC customer service representative Melanie Kinsey.

That's because James A. Kinsey has spent much of the year stationed in Kuwait with the National Guard. Until he gets home, which is scheduled to happen in January, video chatting over PRTC's broadband network is the only way Jakema has to see her dad and show him things like the new shoes she got to start the school year.

"She wants to show him everything," Kinsey says of her daughter.

According to statistics from the Pew Research Center, the Kinseys aren't the only ones logging on to talk face-to-face with loved ones. The Pew study found 19 percent of Americans have tried video calls, video chat or teleconferencing. Among Internet users, nearly a quarter of Americans are using services like Google Talk, Apple iChat, Skype and Yahoo! Messenger to look eye-to-eye with the friends and family members they are talking to.

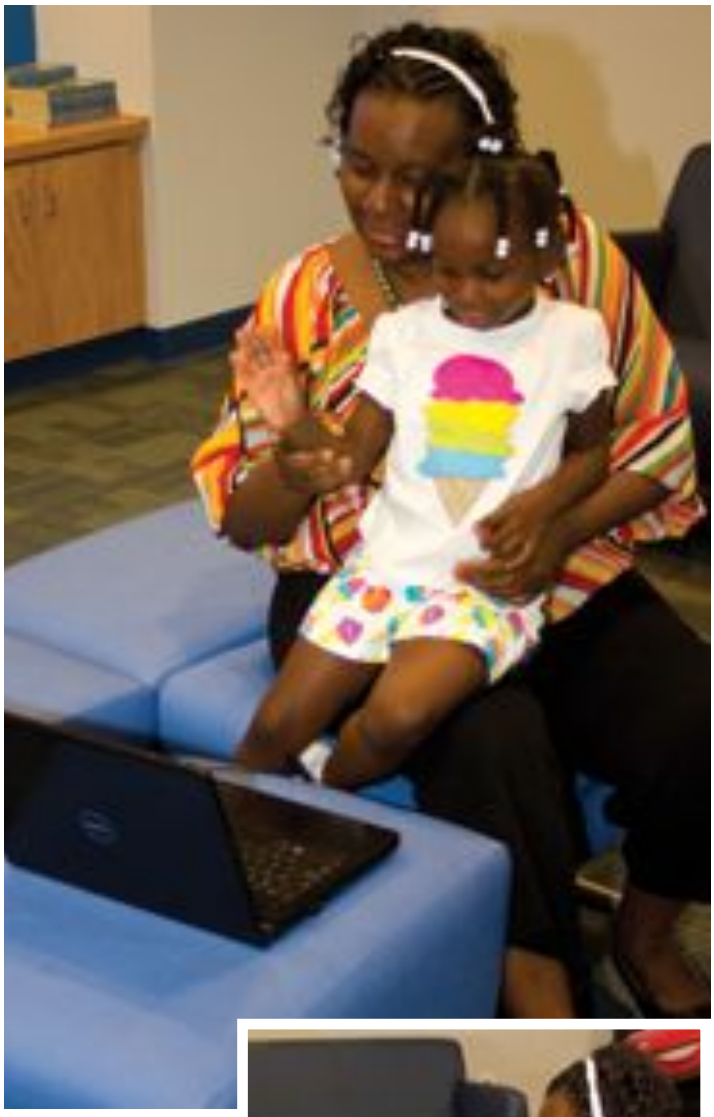
The statistics also show that on a typical day in 2010, four percent of American Internet users used video chat, which was an increase from just two percent in 2009. That increase, experts say, is due to more people having access to broadband networks like PRTC's and more computers coming with built-in cameras.

And while those numbers don't mean much to Jakema, she's figured out what to do with the technology. She'll get the computer and ask her mom to log on. "She'll say 'I want to see my daddy,'" Kinsey says.

Because of the time difference, weekends are the easiest time for the Kinseys to connect. Once Jakema is finished telling her dad about school and other news, Kinsey gets time to talk with her husband. "He always says he's just ready to come home," she says.

But even top-notch technology doesn't make the goodbyes any easier. "When he says he has to go and we have to disconnect, we don't want to," Kinsey says. "That's the hardest part."

Statistically speaking, there are fewer people using video chat in places like Colleton County than in more urban areas. The Pew report shows that about 27 percent of city-dwelling Web surfers use video chat, compared to 23 percent of suburbanites and 12 percent of Internet users in rural areas.



Melanie Kinsey helps her daughter Jakema Abbigail video chat with her father, James A. Kinsey, who is stationed in Kuwait.

But PRTC CEO Jason Dandridge says it doesn't matter where people live, they deserve fast, reliable Internet service. "PRTC has always been about connecting people and as the technology changes, we plan to continue to offer the tools to connect," he says. "This time of year is tough for long-distance families, especially those in the military. Families like the Kinseys and others in our service area with loved ones spread far and wide should have the same ability to connect as people in big cities." ✦

Appetizers for the holiday season

The need for quick and easy appetizers runs high during the holiday season. There are always those drop-in guests to feed and last-minute parties to attend. So make sure you have the ingredients on hand to make these delicious appetizers that will not only impress your guests, but also leave you time to enjoy their company — which is, after all, one of the most important things about the holidays.

Frank's Original Red Hot Santa Fe Chicken Wings

To make things even easier, order "naked" wings from your favorite restaurant, bring them home and coat them with this delicious sauce.

- 2-1/2 pounds chicken wings (split, tips discarded), prepared as desired (fried crispy or baked)
- 1/2 cup Frank's Red Hot cayenne pepper sauce
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup chili sauce

Prepare wings as desired. In a large, microwavable bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Cover loosely and microwave on high for one minute or until butter is melted. Stir until smooth. Add wings and toss to coat completely. Serve with blue cheese or ranch dressing and celery sticks, if desired.

Beer Cheese Dip

- 2 pounds cheddar cheese, room temperature
- 2 cloves garlic, mashed
- 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- Dash or two of hot sauce
- 1/2 bottle beer, or more as needed
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste

In food processor, process cheese until smooth. Add garlic, Worcestershire, dry mustard and hot sauce. Add beer a little at a time while processing cheese mixture. Taste as you go, adding more as needed to obtain a spreading consistency. Add salt, as needed. Serve with assorted crackers.

Note: If you refrigerate this dip, be sure to bring it to room temperature before serving.

French Quarter Cheese Log

Undeniably one of the best appetizers around.

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 tablespoon grated onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon dill weed
- 1 cup chopped pecans, toasted
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar (light or dark)
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon mustard

Mix the cream cheese, onion, garlic and dill weed in a bowl. Shape the cream cheese mixture into a log. Chill, wrapped in plastic wrap, until firm and ready to serve. May be done a day ahead. Combine the toasted pecans, butter, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce and mustard in a saucepan and mix well. Heat until the brown sugar dissolves, stirring frequently. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. Arrange the cheese log on a serving platter and drizzle with the brown sugar sauce. Serve with assorted party crackers.

– Source: "Provisions and Politics," a publication of the James K. Polk Memorial Association

Reuben Dip

- 1 (14 ½-ounce) can sauerkraut
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds (optional)
- 12 ounces deli corned beef, chopped
- 3/4 cup thousand island dressing
- 2 cups shredded Swiss cheese

Preheat oven to 350°. Spoon sauerkraut in bottom of 2-quart casserole. Sprinkle with caraway seeds and corned beef. Spread dressing over top and sprinkle with cheese. Bake uncovered about 20 minutes or until heated through. Serve with party rye or rye crackers.

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